

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ A method for enzymatic preparation of homogentisate (HMO) from ~~4-~~ 4-hydroxyphenylpyruvate (HPP), ~~characterized in that it~~ wherein said method consists in carrying out, in a suitable reaction medium, the following enzymatic reactions:

- enzymatic conversion of HPP into 4-hydroxyphenylacetate (HPA) with an amount of a first suitable enzyme effective to convert HPP into HPA, wherein said first suitable enzyme is a suitable HPP-oxidase, then
- enzymatic conversion of HPA into HMO with an amount of a second suitable enzyme effective to convert HPA into HMO, wherein said second suitable enzyme is a suitable HPA-hydroxylase,

wherein said enzymatic reactions are carried out in the presence of a 4-hydroxyphenylpyruvate dioxygenase (HPPD) inhibitor in said suitable reaction medium.

2. (canceled).

3. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the HPP-oxidase originates from bacteria which ~~can~~ grow on HPP as the only carbon source.

4. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the HPP-oxidase originates from *Arthrobacter*.

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the HPA-hydroxylase originates from bacteria which can grow on HPA as the only carbon source.
7. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 6, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the bacteria are chosen from *Pseudomonas acidovarans*, *Xanthobacter*, *Pseudomonas alcaligenes*, *Flavobacterium sp.*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Nocardia sp.* DM1 and *Rhodococcus erythropolis*.
8. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to Claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the HPA-hydroxylase is extracted from *Pseudomonas acidovarans*.
9. (canceled)
10. (canceled)
11. (canceled)
12. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein both enzymatic reactions are carried out in the same reaction medium containing HPP, the two suitable enzymes being present together at the same time in the reaction medium.
13. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the two suitable enzymes are introduced into the suitable reaction medium in the form of protein extracts, or alternatively they are produced in situ by suitable ~~biological organisms~~ bacteria, yeast or plant cells.